

Cheater © Xen

How does one know he or she is master or mistress of the game? *Checkmate.* When playing the family man role, one day while in an adjacent room reading I overheard 7 year old daughter and her grandmother playing a game of cards. All was church mouse quiet in there but for an occasional giggle and frustrated huff-snort. Suddenly, “CHEATER! CHEATER! CHEATER!” volcanically erupted and broke silence as Daughter huffily stormed past me positing her angry body in an adjacent chair snorting like a ringed bull. In background, her grandmother was howling peals of belly laughter. When Daughter calmed I asked, “What is going on?” ‘She is cheating and that is not fair,’ said she. ‘Yep, life is not fair but both of you were cheating. Grandma, being older and more experienced, is better at it than you are...” said I. “It’s not fair,” retorted young lass. The fairness – actually unfairness – issue surfaced a lot in those days. Wishing to not revisit that tired matter I said, ‘watch to match your grandma’s moves, think about, copy and use them against her to your advantage... then see how that works out....she is teaching you how to play and win the game.” Suddenly, Ms. Herself’s eyes lit up, brightened, and on wheels of a determined master strategy she returned to engage her foe. Grandma never knew what hit her. Daughter’s losing streak continued until hours later when grandmother shrieked a defiant “CHEATER! CHEATER! CHEATER!” Now her granddaughter laughed in sweet triumph from using a winning counter strategy against her seasoned opponent by turning an adversaries game against her. Oddly, contrary to grandma’s opinion, Daughter did not think her win was unfair or deceitful at all. Whereas her position was certainly unreasonable when facing turned tables to grandma’s favor. How does one know when she has mastered the game? *Checkmate.* Daughter learned to *play the game.* Within that, I suppose in life all is fair in love, war and when gaming an opponent – even ‘cheating’ grandmothers.